

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

March 3, 2009

During the past three years, the Sheriff's Department has hired more than 2,500 deputies, an extraordinary number over a short period of time. In the past three months, the Office of Independent Review (OIR) has issued two separate reports critical of the hiring and training of a number of these deputies. In both reports, OIR found that the department's need to quickly hire deputies resulted in significant lapses in screening processes.

The first report, issued in December 2008, revealed a breakdown of testing at the Sheriff's Academy. In violation of POST (Peace Officers Standards and Training) requirements, instructors gave some trainees test answers and inappropriately allowed them to retake exams. The report concluded that the testing violations noted in the POST report were partially explained by the atmosphere of accelerated hiring.

The most recent report, dated February 2009, investigated the impact of a dramatic shift in hiring philosophy—a so-called “holistic” approach—aimed at quickly swelling the department's ranks by considering the entirety of an applicant's background. This approach broke with past practices of automatically disqualifying applicants for certain transgressions or characteristics. The result, according to OIR, was that many deputies were pushed through the system despite flawed background

MOTION

MOLINA _____

RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

ANTONOVICH _____

KNABE _____

investigations. While stressing that the vetting for most deputies appeared thorough, the OIR nonetheless issued 41 recommendations to strengthen numerous shortcomings it identified in the applicant review process.

While it is important to ensure future improvement of the hiring process, it is also crucial for the Sheriff's Department to monitor deputies ushered into the department during this rapid acceleration of hiring. In this way, we can help ensure that neither the department's high standards nor the public's confidence will be undermined.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Office of Independent Review, working in conjunction with the Sheriff's Department:

- 1) Describe in detail all efforts currently underway in the Sheriff's Department to correct deficiencies in hiring practices and protocols, along with efforts that have and will be made to implement each of the OIR recommendations in its February, 2009, report. The OIR should report back in 60 days in writing on these matters and provide a timeline for implementation of the recommendations;
- 2) Create a system to monitor deputies who joined the department during the period of accelerated hiring examined in the two OIR reports. This group should be monitored during the first five years of their service on the department and provided additional training if deemed necessary. OIR should report back in writing in 60 days on these proposed procedures and, once a system is implemented, issue annual reports on the status of these monitoring and training efforts.